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THE DOCTRINE OF CYCLES

By A STUDENT
of
KATHERINE TINGLEY
Leader and Official Head of the
Universal Brotherhood and Theosophical Society
Throughout the World

SECOND AND REVISED EDITION

The Aryan Theosophical Press
Point Loma, California
1923

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PREFACE

THE remarks under this head are intended to be introductory to each of the Manuals.

First, as to the spirit in which they are offered. These Manuals are not written in a controversial spirit, nor as an addition to the stock of theories awaiting public approval. The writers have no time to waste in arguing with people who do not wish to be convinced, or who ridicule everything which is new to their limited outlook. Their message is for those who desire to know — those who are seeking for something that will solve their doubts and remove their difficulties. For such, all that is needed is a clear exposition of the Theosophical teachings; for they will judge of the truth of a teaching by its power to answer the questions they ask. People realize, much more now than in the

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early days of the Theosophical Society, the value of Theosophy; for the ever-increasing difficulties engendered by selfishness and materialism, by doubt and the multiplicity of theories, have created an urgent demand which it alone can satisfy.

Again, it is necessary to state clearly and emphatically the genuine teachings of Theosophy, as given by the Founder of the Theosophical Society, H. P. Blavatsky, and her successors, William Q. Judge and Katherine Tingley. For, as H. P. Blavatsky predicted, there are persons who have sought to pervert these teachings and turn them into a source of profit to themselves and their own selfish and ambitious schemes. The true teachings do not lend themselves to such purposes; their ideals are of the purest and most unselfish. Hence these persons have sought to promulgate under the name of Theosophy a perverted form of the teachings, from which Brotherliness and other pure motives are omitted, and which contains doctrines which H. P. Blavatsky showed to be maleficent and destructive. As these pseudo-Theosophists have gained a certain amount of notoriety

by using the names of the Theosophical Society and its Leaders, it is necessary to warn the public against them and their misrepresentations. Their teachings can easily be shown, by comparison, to be directly contrary to those of H. P. Blavatsky, whom they nevertheless profess to follow. Instead of having for their basis self-sacrifice, self-purification, and the elevation of the human race, these teachings too often pander to ambition, vanity, and curiosity. In many cases they are altogether ridiculous, and only calculated to make people laugh. Nevertheless, as these travesties have served to discredit the name of Theosophy and to keep earnest inquirers away from the truth, it is well that the public should know their nature and origin. They are the work of people who were at one time members of the Theosophical Society, but who did not find in it that food for their own personalities of which they were really in search. So they turned against their teachers in wounded pride and vanity and started little societies of their own — with themselves at the head.

The writers of these Manuals have no per-

sonal grievance against any such calumniators. Inspired by a profound love of the sublime teachings of Theosophy, they have made it their life-work to bring within the reach of as many people as possible the benefits which they have thereby received. And they feel that they will have the hearty sympathy and co-operation of the public in exposing folly and bringing the truth to light.

Theosophy strikes unfamiliar ground in modern civilization, because it does not come under any particular one of the familiar headings of Religion, Science, Philosophy, etc., into which our age has divided its speculative activities. It dates back to a period in the history of mankind when such distinctions did not exist, when there was one Gnosis or Knowledge embracing all. Religion and Science, as we have them today, are but imperfect growths springing from the remnants of that great ancient system, the Wisdom-Religion, which included all that we now know as religion and science, and much more. Hence Theosophy will not appeal to the same motives as religion and science. It will not offer any cheap

and easy salvation or put a premium upon mental inactivity and spiritual selfishness. Neither can it accommodate itself to the rules laid down by various schools of modern thought as to what constitutes proof and what does not. But it can and does appeal to the Reason. The truth of doctrines such as Theosophy maintains, can only be estimated by their ability to solve problems and by their harmony with other ideas which we know to be true. But in addition to this we have the testimony of the ages, which has been too long neglected by modern scholarship, but which is now being revealed by archaeologists and scholars, as H. P. Blavatsky prophesied that it would in this century.

It may perhaps be as well also to remind those who would criticise, that the state of modern opinion is scarcely such as to warrant anybody in assuming the attitude of a judge. It would be quite proper for a Theosophist, instead of answering questions or attempting to give proofs, to demand that his questioners should first state their own case, and to be himself the questioner. The result would certainly show that Theosophy, to say

the very least, stands on an equal footing with any other view, since there is no certain knowledge, no satisfying explanation, to be found anywhere.

Since the days when the wave of materialism swept over the world, obliterating the traces of the ancient Wisdom-Religion and replacing it by theological dogmatism, our religions have had nothing to offer us in the way of a philosophical explanation of the laws of Being as revealed in Man and in Nature. Instead we have only had bare statements and dogmatic assertions. The higher nature of man is represented by such vague words as Spirit and Soul, which have little or no meaning for the majority. The laws of the universe are briefly summed up under the term 'God,' and all further consideration of them shut off. Then came a reaction against the dogmatism of religion, and man pinned his faith to knowledge gained by study and reflexion, limiting his researches however to the outer world as presented by the senses, and fearing to trench upon the ground which dogmatic theology had rendered the field of so much contention. The

result of this has been that neither in religions nor the sciences, have we any definite teaching about the higher nature of man or the deeper mysteries of the universe. This is a field which is left entirely unexplored, or is at best the subject of tentative and unguided conjectures.

Therefore until religious teachers have something definite, consistent, and satisfactory to offer, and until science can give us something better than mere confessions of nescience or actual denials with regard to everything beyond its own domain, Theosophy can afford to assume the role of questioner rather than that of the questioned, and does not *owe* anybody any explanations whatever. It is sufficient to state its tenets and let them vindicate themselves by their greater reasonableness; and any further explanation that may be offered is offered rather from good will than from any obligation.

Theosophy undertakes to explain that which other systems leave unexplained, and is, on its own special ground, without a competitor. It can issue a challenge to theology, science, and other mod-

ern systems, to surpass it in giving a rational explanation of the facts of life.

Again, there are some questions which it is beyond the reach of the human mind, in *its present stage of development*, to answer; and it would scarcely be just to arraign Theosophy for not answering these.

Judgment should in all cases be preceded by careful study. There are always those who will impatiently rush to questions which a further study would have rendered unnecessary; and it is safe to say that the majority of 'objections' raised to Theosophical teachings are such as could have been solved by the objector himself, had he been a genuine student. In the ordinary courses of education, students are required and are content, to accept provisionally many of the teachers' statements, in full confidence that further study will explain what in the beginning cannot be made clear. In the same spirit an earnest student of Theosophy will be wise enough to hold many of his difficulties in reserve, until, by further investigation, he has gained better acquaintance with his subject. In the case of those who are not

willing to adopt these wise and patient methods of study, it may be reasonably questioned whether they are the more anxious to learn or to disprove.

Above all it is sought to make these Manuals such that they shall appeal to the heart and not *merely* to the head; that they shall be of practical service to the reader in the problems of his daily life, and not mere intellectual exercises. For there have been in past days books written by persons more distinguished for a certain grade of mental nimbleness than for heartfelt devotion to the cause of truth; and these have appealed only to those people who love intricate philosophical problems better than practical work. But as H. P. Blavatsky so frequently urged, the message of Theosophy is for suffering humanity; and the great Teachers, whose sole purpose is to bring to mankind the Light of Truth and the saving grace of real Brotherliness, can have no interest in catering to the mental curiosity of merely a few well-to-do individuals. Even soulless men, said H. P. Blavatsky, can be brilliantly intellectual; but for those who are in earnest in their de-

sire to reach the higher life, intellectual fireworks alone will have little attraction. We intend, therefore, to keep the practical aspect of the teachings always to the front, and to show, as far as possible, that they are what they claim to be — the gospel of a new hope and salvation for humanity.

These Booklets are not all the product of a single pen, but are written by different Students at the International Headquarters of the UNIVERSAL BROTHERHOOD AND THEOSOPHICAL SOCIETY, at Point Loma, California. Each writer has contributed his own quota to the series.

For further explanations on Theosophy generally, the reader is referred to the other Manuals of this series, which treat of Theosophy and the various Theosophical teachings, and to those works listed in the Book List of Standard Theosophical Literature for sale by The Theosophical Publishing Co., Point Loma, California.

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I

CYCLIC LAW UNIVERSAL

WHATEVER attention men of science may have given to the action of cyclic law in some realms of nature, it is certain that in recent times little notice has been taken of it by most Western peoples. We are doubtless more or less conscious of the reign of law in terrestrial as in sidereal affairs. "History repeats itself" is a trite saying, often applied to the petty as well as to the larger events of life. But we have surely not gained more than a faint notion of the universality of this law — in everything from tiniest atoms to circling universes; in living forces; in our emotions, aspirations, intelligence; in individual and racial consciousness: in all the panorama of life, whether visible or invisible. Nor do we seem to have learned so to use, or rather to respect,

cyclic laws, as to redeem or free them from the action of lower forces. Or, putting it more exactly, so to use inner cyclic laws as to free or transmute outer ones, and thus to open the path of a true and boundless freedom within the regions of equally true and illimitable law.

The doctrine of cycles, one of the teachings met with in the study of Theosophy, is no merely metaphysical fancy, but will be found to be something which can be not only verified by study and observation, but seized upon and applied practically in everyday life; and this even without very much effort, yet producing results beneficent, sane, and far-reaching.

We shall first glance at some manifestations of cyclic law in the world about us. In the effort to do so, we shall be inevitably confronted with some apparent 'mysteries,' which will probably suggest the action of definite laws belonging to inner causal realms. We may be led to perceive a fact which the latest scientific thought has al-

ready formulated regarding the phenomenal world — namely, that there are very few laws known to science or philosophy behind which there may not be higher laws capable of either 'upsetting,' 'reversing,' or at least modifying effects hitherto considered inevitable under given circumstances. In short, our knowledge of nature's laws being relative and limited, we shall perhaps realize that the barriers of the known continually recede; and thus we may be encouraged fearlessly yet reverently to press onward. We shall never rise above the domain of Law, but we may reach places where the picture of formerly imagined laws — e. g. the 'law of universal gravitation'— will be seen to be nothing more than a necessary though passing stage in the evolution of human intelligence, itself under cyclic laws of development.

It need hardly be said that every thought of force or value in this as in the other Manuals of this series is taken mainly from the teachings or writings of H. P. Blavatsky,

William Q. Judge, and Katherine Tingley, the three Leaders of the Theosophical Movement in this era; or is at least derived from these teachings, to which all earnest students of life should refer for fuller information and guidance — because in these teachings will be found epitomized much more of those of the ancient Wisdom-Religion than can readily be found in offshoots or commentaries.

In the domains of biology and pathology the existence of cyclic law has not escaped attention. The following passage is from the *Medical Review*, July, 1844:

> There is a harmony of numbers in all nature; in the force of gravity, in the planetary movements, in the laws of heat, light, electricity and chemical affinity, in the forms of animals and plants, in the perception of the mind. The direction, indeed, of modern natural and physical science, is towards a generalization which shall express the fundamental laws of all, by one simple numerical ratio. We would refer to Professor Whewell's *Philosophy of the Inductive Sciences*, and to Mr. Hay's researches into the laws of harmonious color and form. From these it appears that *the number seven* is distinguished in the laws regulating the har-

monious perception of forms, colors and sounds, and probably of taste also, if we could analyse our sensations of this kind.

So much so, indeed, that more than one physician has stood aghast at the persistent *septenary* return of the cycles in the rise and fall of various complaints; and naturalists have felt themselves at an utter loss to explain this law. As H. Grattan Guinness, F. R. G. S., wrote:

> The birth, growth, maturity, vital functions, decay and death, of insects, reptiles, fishes, birds, mammals, and even of man, are more or less controlled by a law of completion in *weeks*,

i. e., cycles of seven days. Dr. Laycock (*Lancet*, 1842-3), writing on the *Periodicity of Vital Phenomena*, records a "most remarkable illustration and confirmation of the law in insects," and having given a number of illustrations from natural history, the doctor adds:

> The facts I have briefly glanced at are general facts, *and cannot happen day after day in so many millions of animals of every kind, from the Larva or Ovum of a Minute Insect up to Man, at different*

periods, from a mere *chance or coincidence*. I think it impossible to come to any less general conclusion than this, that in *animals, changes occur* every *three and a half, seven, fourteen, twenty-one, or twenty-eight days*, or at some *definite number of weeks*,

or septenary cycles. Again, the same Dr. Laycock states that:

> Whatever type the fever may exhibit, *there will be a paroxysm on the seventh day*, . . . the *fourteenth will be remarkable as a day of amendment* . . . [either cure or death taking place]. If the fourth [paroxysm] be severe, and the fifth less so, the disease will end at the seventh paroxysm, and . . . change for the better . . . will be seen on the *fourteenth day*, namely, about three or four o'clock a.m., when the system is most languid.

Thus materialistic science — medicine, *the most materialistic of all* — applies occult laws to diseases, studies natural history with its help, recognises its presence as a fact in nature, and yet must needs pooh-pooh the same archaic knowledge when claimed as part of the truths known to the ancient Wisdom-Religion! For if the mysterious Septenary Cycle is a law in nature, *and it is one*, as proven; if it is found controlling

evolution and *involution* (or death) in the realms of entomology, ichthylogy and ornithology, as in the kingdom of the animals, mammalia and man — why cannot it be present and acting in Kosmos, in general, in its natural (though occult) divisions of time, races, and *mental* development? And why, furthermore, should not the most ancient Adepts have studied and thoroughly mastered these cyclic laws under all their aspects? Indeed, Dr. Stratton states as a physiological and pathological fact, that

> in health the human pulse is more frequent *in the morning than the evening for six days out of seven;* and that on the *seventh day it is slower.*
>
> — *Edin. Med. and Surg. Journal,* Jan. 1843

Why, then, should not Theosophy show the same in cosmic and terrestrial life in the pulse of the planets and races? Dr. Laycock divides life by *three great septenary periods:* the first and last each stretching over twenty-one years, and the central period or prime of life lasting twenty-eight years, or four times seven. He subdivides the first into

seven distinct stages, and the other two into three minor periods, and says that:

> The fundamental unit of the greater periods is *one week of seven days, each day being twelve hours;* [and that] single and compound *multiples* of this unit, determine the length of these periods by the same ratio, as multiples of the unit of twelve hours determine the lesser periods. *This law binds all periodic vital phenomena together, and links the periods observed in the lowest annulose animals, with those of man himself, the highest of the vertebrata.*

If *Science* does this why should she scorn the occult information, namely, that (speaking Dr. Laycock's language) "*one week* of the manvantaric (*lunar*) fortnight of fourteen days (or seven Manus), that fortnight of twelve hours in a day representing the seven periods or seven races — is now passed"? This language of science fits the esoteric doctrine admirably. We (mankind) *have* lived over "*a week of seven days*, each day being *twelve hours*," since three and a half races are now gone forever, the fourth is submerged, and we are now in the Fifth

Race. We shall return to glance at the meaning of this statement presently, and meanwhile it is interesting to note that the Hebrew word for 'week' is Seven; and any length of time divided in seven parts would have meant a 'week' in their day — even 49,000,000 years, as it is seven times seven millions. But their calculation is septiform throughout.

In these days of continual discovery of 'new' sets of invisible rays and radioactivity of various kinds, it need surprise no one to learn that certain rays from the moon exert potent influences upon both vegetable and animal life. And it will be noted that the four quarters of the moon's cycle are each a week in duration. Granting other influences from the sevenfold radiance of the sun, and having regard to the daily, monthly and annual cycles of these two orbs, it is easy to see how vast a network of subtle invisible forces controlling vital phenomena is swayed by the movements of sun, earth, and moon alone. Nor would it be altogether fatuous or

unscientific in these days, to imagine that the other bodies in the solar system also exert definite and cyclic influences in majestic correspondence with their apparent movements across the firmament.

If we admit all this as ascertained scientific fact, it is at least easy to perceive that we have in the solar system a perfect mechanism to serve as the foundation of much in the cyclic phenomena of all terrestrial life, something in fact which would illuminate many problems in biology, to go no further.

If we venture a step further, however, remembering the elements that make us Man, or at least potential Man, that are themselves invisible — for what ordinary mortal ever saw our thoughts, aspirations, emotions or desires? — we surely need not hesitate to conclude that the formative and intelligent powers lying back of the cycling orbs in space, or of the tiniest atom, do in fact reside in the invisible and imponderable side of nature. We must remember also

that the most subtle and elusive powers in nature (*e. g.* the hypothetical 'ether' with its myriad correlations, such as 'gravitation') are being proved to possess dynamic and formative power in inverse ratio to their perceptibleness,— the subtler the force the more powerful its effects. Suns, moons, the earth, plants, and animals with their countless emanations, are but outer appearances or effects, and in fact are farther away from *reality* in exactly the inverse ratio of their apparent solidity.

Granting so much for the sake of argument, it would be evident that the true cyclic laws controlling these planetary movements and their corresponding influences on terrestrial life must reside wholly in the noumenal, invisible, causal realms, as conjectured by both Newton and Leibniz; and a further obvious inference would be that there must be different regions of subtlety in these realms — some for instance, determining the spheres of huge aggregated living and conscious forces; others supervising the

myriads of minor elemental lives that build up the outer vestures of each great center, just as there is a unit-consciousness controlling the action of the myriads of tiny lives in our body.

The importance of cyclic law can hardly be appreciated until we begin to realize that

> Spirit (or Consciousness) and Matter are . . . the two facets or aspects of the Absolute (Parabrahm), which constitute the basis of conditioned Being, whether subjective or objective. . . .
>
> Just as pre-cosmic Ideation is the root of all individual consciousness, so pre-Cosmic Substance is the substratum of matter in the various phases of its differentiation. . . .
>
> . . . apart from Cosmic Ideation, Cosmic Substance would remain an empty abstraction, and no emergence of consciousness could ensue.
>
> — *The Secret Doctrine*, I, p. 15

The second of the three fundamental propositions established by the Secret Doctrine is:

> The Eternity of the Universe *in toto* as a boundless plane; *periodically* "the playground of numberless Universes incessantly manifesting and disappearing,"

called "the manifesting stars," and the "sparks of Eternity." . . .— *Ibid.*, p. 16

Thus cyclic law is a primary fact in cosmogenesis. It underlies all the living phenomena in nature. The third and final fundamental proposition states:

> The fundamental identity of all Souls with the Universal Over-Soul, the latter being itself an aspect of the Unknown Root; and the obligatory pilgrimage for every Soul — a spark of the former — through the *Cycle of Incarnation* (or "Necessity") *in accordance with Cyclic and Karmic law,* during the whole term. . . . The pivotal doctrine of the Esoteric philosophy admits no privileges or special gifts in man, save those won by his own Ego through personal effort and merit throughout a long series of metempsychoses and reincarnations.— *Ibid.*, p. 17 (Italics ours.)

Cyclic law, therefore, underlying every phase of life — for every atom enshrines a spark of one or another kind of consciousness — forms an important branch of study. For instance, if universes alternately manifest and disappear, common sense indicates that these must inhere in something above

and beyond both these processes. Aspects of this ancient and beautiful operation of cyclic law are outlined for us in the *Bhagavad-Gîtâ* and the *Upanishads*, as well as in H. P. Blavatsky's incomparable works. William Q. Judge wrote that these ancient and modern works alone are sufficient for earnest students. But something else is needed besides study, before a light higher than that of the brain-mind can break through. It is Theosophy put into practice — the special work to which Katherine Tingley has directed the energies of the modern Theosophical Movement.

II

ROUNDS OF HUMAN EVOLUTION

THE ancient teaching is that everything in the universe, including the universe itself, is under cyclic law. Analogy being one of the great keys in such studies, we should expect to find that just as we have day and night, summer and winter, waking and sleeping, birth and death; so worlds, suns, sun-systems, universes and the Kosmos, each has its days and nights, summers and winters, waking and sleeping states, 'births' and 'deaths.'

And so, in the noumenal realms, vast periods of time are necessary to build up the different strata of form and conscious life which finally converge upon the objective world as we know it. From a kind of idealized cosmic substance, which is both spirit and matter, cosmic will and intelligence spin

a web reaching through the seven worlds or states from the purely spiritual side of nature down to the objective and material. The details of the process are naturally too vast and complex to be comprehended, but so much of the later processes can at least be outlined as will enable a glimpse of the action of cyclic laws to be reached.

As a result of the sevenfold cosmic forces — Intelligence, Motion, Vital Electricity, Magnetism, Astral Radiation or Emanation, Heat and Light — each center of life, planetary or atomic, becomes finally endowed with a septenary nature, swept by and responding to these septenary forces under cyclic laws. Thus in the case of the Earth (which according to the ancient teaching is the 'child' of the Moon) the real Earth exists on four distinct 'planes' or realms of inner nature, the visible world being the lowest of these. The degree of materiality or density of this lower state, itself changes throughout the aeons of time.

The teaching is that 'countless millions'

of years ago (approximate figures will be found in *The Secret Doctrine*), certain 'rounds' of evolutionary forces passed through that sevenfold center in space which was later to become the Earth, and that we are now in the fourth of these 'rounds.' Each 'round' was concerned with the building up of elements and vehicles for various forms of mineral, vegetable and animal life under various hierarchies of cosmic powers, and at a certain stage suitable *vehicles* for the entrance of higher hierarchies, of a divine consciousness belonging to older cycles, were finally produced. This was the 'Fall' of the angels, who sacrificed their divine natures in order that a consciously divine race should ultimately reign on earth. These have to pass through their self-elected pilgrimage through matter, under the cyclic laws sweeping round the sevenfold world, of which the visible earth, as already said, is the lowest and most material; and it is accomplished during each Round through seven great Races already referred to, of which in this

Fourth Round "three and a half" are gone, the Fourth (the Atlantean epoch) is submerged, and the Fifth is now in progress. Each Great Race is further divided into seven great sub-races, and these again into the branch- or family-races.

Moreover, each Round, Race, and great sub-race is, according to the laws of correspondence, concerned mainly with the involution and evolution of one or other of the principles which go to make up the future complete Man.

Thus we learn that the present Great Race is destined primarily to develop, within the limits of cyclic law, the Higher Intuitional Mind or Human Soul, as distinguished from that other aspect of Mind which is more connected with our emotions, desires, and passions. This evolution, however, will only be fully attained during the next or Fifth Round.

The next point to remember is that these cyclic waves of super-terrestrial forces and intelligences, which vibrate through every

atom of the very air we breathe, are themselves involved in greater and lesser subdivisions, so that in studying the question we can step down in thought from millions to thousands of years, thence to centuries, single years, days, hours, minutes and seconds, and still be tracing the action of the particular element, force, or intelligence under review. (Some scientific writers have recently been tracing analogies between the conditions of the infinitely small and the infinitely great.) As an instance of our independence, in such a study, of time as a bar to comprehension, a period of 100,000 years will be found to bear the same proportion to the duration of one Grand Era of objective conscious Kosmic Life, as one second of our time bears to a hundred years.

THE THREE, SEVEN, AND TEN

WHILE seven is the 'number of the manifested' on all planes of being, three is always inevitably and philosophically the number

of the overshadowing noumenal; hence we should expect to find cycles of both seven and ten and their multiples having an appreciable influence in our progress toward the goal of Fifth Race evolution.

Thus, for example, if a wave of spiritual aspiration lasts for thirty years, we should expect to see it followed by an attempt at realization lasting seventy years, to be succeeded by another wave of spiritual energy. If one of these initial waves happened to coincide with several similar ones of larger cyclic sweep, we should expect to see the force enormously intensified.

A careful study of Eastern Chronology — which embraces periods so vast as to be beyond the dreams of even the most prominent western geologists, and withal so accurate in astronomical calculation, as to put in the shade our vaunted modern knowledge of astronomy — combined with a study of modern history, will be found to confirm the teachings of Theosophy: on the one hand that waves of such aspiration and effort have

occurred every hundred years; and on the other, that several larger cycles recently culminated simultaneously with the appearance on earth of the Teachers and Teachings of the Ancient Wisdom-Religion, in fuller public form than has been known for five thousand years. This of course must correspond to something in humanity capable of receiving and rising to these tremendous though subtle cyclic forces, for as Katherine Tingley said a few years ago: "a new energy has been liberated from the center of life."

This must affect all on earth, whether at first conscious of it or not, and the teachings of Theosophy are therefore a necessity of the age we live in, a response to an inner demand for truth in the hearts and souls of men at this time, and for this century; and they are thus seen to be in harmony with cyclic law.

The cardinal features of these teachings have been outlined in the earlier Manuals.

III

CYCLIC IMPRESSION

WE may turn our attention to the action of cyclic law in our own lives and read if we please something of the inherent or implied correspondences to the larger cycles of human destiny. Its mode of action is by impression. The growing form, whether it be a nucleated cell, an egg, an embryo, a plant, an animal, or man, responds to and is affected by the different cyclic forces impinging upon its inner nature. These result in gradual modifications of form, and of capacity to receive further cyclic impulses or impressions. Thus the thoughts and acts performed by a nation constitute a collective impression. When we take part in gatherings, religious, social, scientific, or what not, definite impressions accrue. When we have a quarrel and get angry, an impression re-

mains in our natures, as much subject to cyclic law as the moon, the stars, and the world, and it is one far more important as affecting our personal development or evolution than all these other great things; for while these affect us in the mass, those little ones affect us in detail.

This law of impression may be illustrated. If we look at an incandescent lamp, the light makes an image on the retina; and if we then shut the eyes, the bright filament will still be seen. If we keep the eyes closed and watch intently, we shall see the image come back a certain number of times: it will stay a certain number of counts, go away the same length of time and return (always changing in some respect but always the image of the filament) until at last it disappears, apparently because other impressions have covered it over. So there is a return even in the retina of the impressions of this filament. After the first time, the color changes each time, and so it keeps *coming back at regular intervals*, showing that there is a cyclic return of impression

in the retina, and if that applies in one place, it applies in every place. And when we look into our moral character we find the same thing: for as we have tides in the ocean, so in man we have tides, which are called return of these impressions. That is to say, we do a thing once, there will be a tendency to repeat; we do it twice, and it doubles its influence. And so on all through our character we have this constant return of cyclic impression.

We have these impressions from every point in space, every experience we have been through, everything that we can possibly go through at any time, even those things which our forefathers went through. And that is not unjust for this reason, that our forefathers furnished the line of bodily encasement, and we cannot enter that line of bodily encasement unless we are like unto it; and for that reason we must have been at some point in that cycle in that same line or family in the past; so that we must have had a hand in constructing the particular

family line in which we now exist, and are once more taking up the cyclic impression returning upon us.

Now this has the greatest possible bearing upon our evolution as particular individuals, the evolution of our bodily life. An opportunity arises for us to do something; we do not do it; we may not have it again for a hundred years. It is the return before us of some old thing that was good, if it is a good one, along the line of the cycles. The opportunity may not return until another life, but it will return under the same law.

Or to take another case. A man is trying to find out things about his psychic nature, perhaps, but pays no attention to the return of the impression which he creates. He has times of depression which he cannot explain, and perhaps someone draws his attention to the fact that these are periodic. He does not know what to do, however, until possibly a friend, who knows something of these cyclic laws, advises him to compel himself to feel joyous, even against his will. Or if he could

not have done that, then to have tried to feel the joy of others. By doing that, he would have implanted in himself another impression, that is of joy, so that when this thing returned, instead of being of the same quality and extension, it would have been changed by the impression of joy or elation; and the two things coming together would have counteracted each other, just as two billiard balls coming together try to counteract each other's movements. This applies to every person who has the 'blues.' When it comes, start up something else, start up cheerfulness, be good to someone, then try to relieve some other person who is despondent, and another impression will have been started which will return at the same time. It does not make any difference if we wait a day or two to make the attempt, for when the old cyclic impression returns it will have dragged up the new one because it is related to it by association. (From the writings of W. Q. Judge.)

IV

THE RETURN OF RACES

THIS has a bearing also on the question of the civilization in which we are a point ourselves. For who are we really? Where are we going? Where have we come from? The old Egyptians disappeared. If we examine Egyptian history, the most interesting because the most obscure, we shall find the writers saying that that civilization seems to rise to the zenith at once. We do not see when it began. The civilization was so great it must have existed an enormous length of time to get to that height, so that we cannot trace it from its beginning, and it disappears suddenly from the sky; there is nothing of it left but the enormous remains which testify to these great things, for the ancient Egyptians not only made mummies in which they displayed an art of bandaging

that we cannot better, but they had put everything to such a degree of specialization that we must conclude they had many centuries of civilization. There was a specialist for one eye and a specialist for the other, a specialist for the eyebrow, and so on.

We are the Egyptians! We have come back again, after our five thousand or so years' cycle, and we have dragged back with us what is called the Semitic race, with which we are connected by some old impression that we cannot get rid of, and so upon us is impinged that very Semitic image. We have drawn back with us, by the inevitable law of association in cyclic return, some race, some personages connected with us by some acts of ours in that great old civilization now disappeared, and we cannot get rid of it; we must raise them up to some other place as we raise ourselves.

Here in America is the evidence that this old civilization is coming back, for in the Theosophical theory nothing is lost. If we were left to records, buildings and the like,

they would soon disappear and nothing could ever be recovered; there never would be any progress. But each individual in the civilization, wherever it may be, puts the record in himself, and when he comes into the favorable circumstances described by Patañjali, an old Hinḍû — when he gets the apparatus, he will bring out the old impression. The ancients say each act has a thought under it, and each thought makes a mental impression; and when the apparatus is provided, there will arise that new condition, in rank, place, and endowment.

So we retain in ourselves the impression of all the things that we have done, and when the time comes that we have returned—over and over again, through the Middle Ages perhaps, into England, into Germany, into France —we come at last to an environment such as is provided here, just the thing physically and every other way to enable us to do well, and to help the others who are coming after us. One can almost see them; they are coming in a little army from the countries

of the Old World to endeavor to improve this one; for here ages ago there was a civilization also—perhaps anterior to the ancient Egyptian—and perhaps we were in it then. It disappeared from here (when, we do not know) and it left this land arid for many thousands of years until it was discovered once more by the Europeans.

Most of the ancient world in Europe has been poisoned, the land has been soaked with emanations, poisoned by the emanations of the people who have lived upon it; the air above it is consequently poisoned by the emanations from the land; but here in America, just the place for the new race, is an arable land which has had time over and over again to destroy the poisons that were planted here ages and ages ago. It gives us a new land, with vibrations in the air that stir up every particle in a man who breathes it, and thus we find the people coming from the Old World seeming to receive through their feet the impressions of an American country. All this bears upon our civilization and race.

We are here a new race in a new cycle; and those who know say that a cycle has ended and a new one already begun, and that ending and beginning will be accompanied by convulsions of society and of nature, some of which have already taken place.

We can all almost see the coming of the new cycle. Daniel said: "A time, half a time, and a time," and so on, and people in the Christian system have been trying to find out when the time began, but that is just the difficulty. We do not know when the time began. And the only person who in all these many years first made a direct authoritative statement is Madame Blavatsky, who said, "A cycle is ending in a few years, you must prepare." So that it was like the old prophets who came to the people and said, "Prepare for a new era of things, get ready for what you have to do." That is just what this civilization is doing. It is the highest, although the crudest civilization now on earth. It is the beginning of the great civilization that is to come. The

great new civilization will be one with the ancient East, who has sat there silently all these years, holding in her ancient crypts and libraries and records the philosophy which the world needs; and it is this philosophy and this ethics, which belonged equally to ancient America, that the UNIVERSAL BROTHERHOOD AND THEOSOPHICAL SOCIETY is putting into practice before the eyes of the whole world. It is a philosophy which can be understood and practised.

It is well enough to say to a man: Do right. But after a while, in this superstitious era, he will say: Why should I do right, unless I feel like it? When we show him these laws, that he must come back in his cycle; that he is subject to evolution; that he is a reincarnated pilgrim-soul, then he will see the reason why, and then in order to get himself a secure basis, he accepts the philosophy. (From the writings of W. Q. Judge.)

V

CYCLIC EVOLUTION

IF we turn to Buckle, a great writer of the English school, we find him saying in one of his often quoted books, that there is no doubt that cyclic law prevails in regard to nations, that they have come back apparently the same, only slightly improved or degraded, for there is a downward cycle included within those that rise; but he did not discover a law. He simply once more stated what the ancients had said over and over again. And it would seem that if such writers would pay a little more attention to the ancients, they would save themselves a great deal of trouble, for he obtained his law by much delving, much painstaking labor; whereas he might have gotten the law if he had consulted the ancients, who always

taught that there were cycles, and that there always will be cycles.

As in the objective world of matter, or the system of *effects*, the planets gravitate around the Sun, so in the world of the subjective, or the system of *causes*, these innumerable cycles all gravitate between that which the finite intellect of the ordinary mortal regards as eternity, and the still finite but more profound intuition of the sage and philosopher views as but an eternity within *The Eternity*. "As above, so it is below," runs the old Hermetic axiom.

The figures connected with what are sometimes called 'The Days and Nights of Brahmâ' (see *The Secret Doctrine*, II, pp. 68-70) show better than anything the immense sweep of cyclic laws recorded in the literature of the archaic East; and the 'theory of evolution,' far from being a modern discovery, is more remotely ancient than our modern ever dreamed of, besides being thoroughly scientific. But in studying the ancient teachings, the sevenfold division of

Nature should be held in view; just as the interaction between Karma and Reincarnation (the 'Wheel of Rebirth'), in order to be properly grasped, requires the same natural, meta-physical, and scientific substratum. Eliminate the dynamic powers of Spirit, Intelligence, Will, Âkâsa, and Life, which form the bases of all Nature's phenomena, and nothing is left for the modern speculator but his 'nerve-reflexes' wherewith to account for the grandeur, beauty, and harmony found throughout the worlds of being.

For the materialist the presence of cyclic laws in all their ramifications of time, place, and circumstance, must seem next to an impossibility, because he occupies himself with those things alone which are cognised by physical organs of perception. Do not many regard even the mind as a sort of automatic 'by-product' of matter — at the same time admitting their inability to define what matter really is? Even when some of the more advanced scientists encounter some of Nature's more recondite aspects, the material-

istic bias again supervenes in their mistaking these for the action of *spirits*. Whereas *matter*, properly so called, only begins on that plane of perception. The archaic septenary division of the principles in man really stopped *before* his mere 'physical' body was reached at all — a fact which shows the enormous gulf between ancient philosophy and modern materialism.

The ancient and modern Teachers speak of an imponderable, tenuous, and highly elastic medium which interprenetrates the entire globe, and in which our acts and thoughts are felt and impressed, to be afterwards reflected. Those who have not learned self-control are especially subject to the influences of the pictures impressed in that medium. But those which affect us are conditioned by our real, inner character. When we realize that the images in this Archaeus (one of the lower aspects of the Âkâsa) persist for centuries, it can be seen how upon returning to Earth-life we are impressed for good or ill by the conduct of

preceding nations and individuals. *Evil thoughts being the more material,* these are the more firmly imprinted in the lowest aspects of the Âkâsa. Thus we are ordinarily much at the mercy of whatever evil we have done, for the real man begins with the 'astral' body within him — the model-body upon which the 'physical' atoms arrange and continually renew themselves.

It would be absurd to say that there is anything misty about all this. The whole literature of antiquity teems with proof of the fact. Our fathers, in the West, would have called radioactivity a 'mystical' teaching, and scouted it as foolishness. But as that 'astral' inner body — which is not the inner Man, but merely a vesture thereof — forms the point of contact with the Âkâsa, and therefore affords a basis for the comprehension of the *modus operandi* of cyclic law, it seemed needful to advert to this subject.

It has never been pretended that the Helpers of the race were able to draw nations in the mass to this or that crisis in

spite of the *general drift of the world's cosmic relations.* Years ago one of them wrote:

The cycles must run their course. Periods of mental and moral light and darkness succeed each other as day does night. The major and minor *yugas* must be accomplished *according to the established order of things.* And we, borne along on the mighty tide, can only modify and direct some of its minor currents. If we had the powers of the imaginary personal God, and the immutable laws were but toys to play with, then, indeed, might we have created conditions that would have turned this Earth into an Arcadia for lofty souls.

And W. Q. Judge said those Helpers hold that there is an indissoluble connexion between man and every event that takes place on this globe — not only the changes in political and social life, but all the happenings in the mineral, vegetable, and animal kingdoms.

The changes in the seasons are for and through man; the great upheavals of continents, the movements of immense glaciers, the terrific eruptions of volcanos, or the sudden overflowings of great rivers — whether he be conscious of them, or present or absent. And

they tell of great changes in the inclination of the axis of the Earth, past and to come, all due to man. . . . For a Helper, standing on the immeasurable height where centuries lie under his glance, sees the great cycles and the lesser rolling onward, influenced by man and working out their changes for his punishment, reward, experience, and development.

Because in the past we degraded spiritual things and turned mighty powers over nature to base uses; because we did *in excelsis*, in Atlantean times, that which is hinted at now in the glorification of wealth — we now suffer the effects in our inability to attain our goal, or to remove from among us the grinding-stones of poverty.

We are, as yet, only preparers, much as we may exalt our plainly crude American development. We live in a preparatory cycle, with much of necessary destruction in it; for, before construction, we must have some disintegration. We are preparing here a new race which will exhibit the perfection of the glories that were being slowly brought to the surface in the long-forgotten past. This process will go on until in the course of many generations there will be produced on the American continents an entirely new race: new bodies; new orders of intellect; new

powers of the mind; curious and unheard of psychic powers, as well as extraordinary physical ones; with new senses and extensions of present senses now unforeseen. When this new sort of body and mind are generated — then other monads, or our own again, will animate them and paint upon the screen of time the pictures of 100,000 years ago.

— W. Q. JUDGE, in *Echoes from the Orient*

TRENDS OF DESCENT AND ASCENT

AMONG the ancients they had a great many large and important cycles. In their classification they had a Saros and a Neros, the exact nature of which is not generally known today. The Egyptians taught that there was a great sidereal cycle, and this is recognised today, at last, as the period during which the sun passes through the complete circle of the zodiac. That is to say, if the sun occupies at a given date, say at the vernal equinox, a certain position, it takes 26,000 years before it again occupies the same apparent position among the stars at the vernal equinox. It is now called the cycle of precession of the equinoxes.

But as the sun itself moves onward through space round a center, as known to the ancients, our real course around the sun is a spiral which in truth corresponds to the way in which cyclic law acts throughout nature. We ascend and descend, and re-ascend, as individuals and as races, but the culminating point of re-ascent on the upward-moving cycle is always a step higher than before. On the 'downward' or outward cycles during the first half of the evolution of man on a world, the spirally acting septenary forces pass round the septenary world-chain as already said, each wave gradually perfecting and materializing the embodied forms of conscious life in the different kingdoms of nature. And thus it happens, too, that in the lower, or physical world of any chain, on earth for instance, there are perceptible gaps in any septenary classification hitherto attempted by science, as, for example, in the sevenfold grouped tables of the chemical so-called elements.

It follows also from the movement of the

sun with its attendant orbs through space — whether round Alcyone, or some other center — that the earth moves into new regions of space continually, into cosmic spaces where things are different, where the subtle invisible forces are different; and thus it is that changes must be induced in the earth itself: for changes in cosmic matter in the air and the ether, in the new spaces traversed by the earth, must affect the earth and all its inhabitants.

Just so, in the complex events of human history, when the waves of involutionary force—destined to lift man from his too close contact with the external, back to a perception and realization of the subtler powers latent within himself and nature — impinge upon him and stir his inmost nature, impelling him to action on new and higher lines, such forces in their recurring cycles, great or small, are the same yet not the same. Always there is some new quality in the balancing of forces and subtle influences; and as his material body becomes gradually more re-

fined and responsive to the administration of the indwelling subtle nature and its manifold spiritual essences, the more varied and beautiful will become the possibilities of soul-expression and expansion.

While the dark ages through which we have passed are in part karmic effects of prior racial cycles, yet they are but the stepping-stones on which through experience we may rise to better comprehension of our place in nature, if we take courage and learn the lessons.

For if the cyclic truth of Reincarnation, one of the most self-evident laws in nature, be once fairly grasped, we may discern the importance, not only to ourselves but to the race as a whole (with whose destiny each of us is indissolubly connected) of trying to read, and understand something of, the meaning of the dark ages.

These ages were for Europe dark in regard to any true teaching *publicly* given on man's inner nature and destiny. They were not dark for all Europeans by any means, for the

light some of them have shed into every nook and cranny of our modern life and thought is brilliant indeed. Yet dark were the times which commenced with the murder of Hypatia, since when men have scarcely dared proclaim their disbelief or doubt except at peril of torture-chamber, guillotine, or fagot.

But who were the culprits? We are prone to lay these things at the doors of ecclesiasticism and priestcraft. But who supported and succumbed to ecclesiasticism, who condoned and upheld it? We did. If there was a Teacher of the Law of Compassion some nineteen hundred or two thousand years ago who was crucified, who crucified him? We did. For that matter, who killed Hypatia, or Joan of Arc? We did. It does not matter whether we were actually present at such events or not, we belong, most of us, to just that stage of human *un*development which makes us participants, aiders and abettors, in them. We are morally responsible for all these happenings, no doubt in greater or less

degree, but still responsible. We individually may or may not have been incarnated at the time of a particular crime, but that does not affect the question. Human consciousness, so far as incarnated through those times, was in the main too strongly immersed in a false psychology and too occupied with material affairs to act otherwise.

MAN NOT YET FULLY MAN

THE true view is that *human* consciousness has not fully incarnated — yet — except to some degree in a minority; and thus it is still largely true that if you scratch a man you find — something else! It is the main purpose of the present Fifth Great Race to effect the incarnation, up to a point, of the true Human Soul within its bodily encasement of passions, emotions, and intellectualism, thus transmuting them, for none of these latter are Soul in any true sense. They are the instruments or vehicles through which the soul will eventually ab-

sorb through ripe experience the half-tragic half-humorous effects of its contact with outer material existence; in its turn refining and raising these vehicles to its own conscious stature, where laws of ineffable harmony, beauty, and truth beyond our highest dreams constitute the inner keyboard of our marvelous divine nature.

In truth we need be dismayed at nothing, not even at the tragedies in which we have taken guilty part, so long as we press upward and onward with a passionate belief in the inner beauty that resides in the awakening Soul of the Race.

VI

CYCLIC LAW IN HISTORY

THE workings of Cyclic Law in history are most easily seen when one looks at those phases of activity which are nearest the human spirit and record its motions most immediately. Thus a national literature mirrors much more clearly and intimately the thought and feelings of the nation, than does the story of its wars and politics: these latter are but secondary expressions of the national soul, whereas the literature is primary, nearer to the world of causes. So the cyclic changes are first recorded there; and the student of any national literature will probably find no great difficulty in recognising marked periods of action and reaction, creation and rest — days and nights, as it were — following each other in due order. As an example, we may

glance at the history of English poetry.

It was in the reign of Edward I (1272-1307) that the English began to be a nation: then first they felt themselves Englishmen, and not merely Saxons or Normans, laymen or clerics, nobles or serfs. At that time, say about 1270, English poetry, founded on English scenery and the direct perceptions and feelings of the poets themselves, began to be written. This movement culminated in Chaucer, and ended at his death in 1400; having thus lasted about one hundred and thirty years. Then the inspiration died out, and we find men writing whose only effort was to imitate Chaucer, and who did that very badly. In 1530, however, or thereabouts, Sir Thomas Wyatt traveled in France and Italy, and discovered in those countries the seeds of a new inspiration; his work, and that of his friend the Earl of Surrey, mark the beginning of a new age of poetry in England. From small beginnings that age progressed until it had produced Spenser, Marlowe, Shakespeare and Milton;

then, in 1660, with the restoration of the Stuarts, a change in the national mood became manifest. Where the Elizabethan poets and their successors had sought to see and express the beauty of Nature and the deeper aspects of the human mind and heart, the men of the age of Dryden and Pope had no eye for Nature at all; they were oblivious of beauty; and all they saw or cared to see in man was personality; their aim was wit and intellectual polish. There were exceptions, but this is the characteristic of the age from 1660 on. In 1790 young Wordsworth went to France, and caught fire in the spiritual upheaval of the Revolution; he came home bringing with him the inspiration of a new poetic age. Once more poets were to seek the beauty of the Divine manifested in Nature and in the human soul. Lastly, anyone who follows the literary criticism of the present day will find it continually noted that in these last two or three years another change has taken place: that beauty is being sought less and less. Thus we see

very clearly marked a 'day' of 130 years from 1270 to 1400; a 'night,' as long, from 1400 to 1530; a 'day' from 1530 to 1660; a 'night' from 1660 to 1790; and a 'day' from 1790 to 1920: each period lasting 130 years. Before every date given one should insert the word 'about': the figures are not water-tight or hard and fast; but it is certain that in each case they do mark a profound change that took place in the national consciousness.*

Such changes would also take effect in politics and events; but in the confined scope of a national history cyclic law is not so easy to trace on that plane. One needs a larger stage: one in which the rises and falls of nations are but incidents, and one nation appears in its place in relation to others and to the whole.

Now the first phase of civilization that we know much about is one that had its seat

*See also 'The Three Bases of Poetry,' *The Theosophical Path,* Vols. XII-XIII.

in Western Asia (including Egypt), and that came to an end about the time of Alexander the Great (336-323 B. C.). There had been successions of empires centering in the neighborhood of Mesopotamia, and successions of empires on the Nile; we do not know the dates of their beginnings; but we do know that a long age of power and culture had come to a close, had ceased to be vital and energic, some time before Alexander toppled the semblance of its greatness into the grave. Thereafter those territories were ruled by foreigners — Macedonians, Romans, or the nomad Parthians from Central Asia — for a matter of six centuries or so,— a night in time, during which great and energetic men were not born in Egyptian or Persian or West Asiatic bodies as they had been of old.

But some century or more before that night descended on West Asia, a day had dawned in Europe: great men began to be born in Greece; a creative age of culture and power started there, and went on to in-

volve Rome and the regions which formed her empire. For present purposes we may take the date of Marathon as marking the European dawn,— 490 B. C. The day that began then ended with the fall of the Roman Empire.

While that European day was still in its morning, a great change from night to day took place in the Far East. China had been, for some centuries, a decadent weak civilization surrounded by a number of 'Great Powers' generally at war among themselves and always interested in bullying China and grabbing her territories: the picture is much like that we have seen in our own time, only China then was limited to a small part of the Hoang-ho Valley. About 250 B. C. one of these 'Great Powers' effected the conquest of the known world, absorbing China herself and all her other oppressors. Thus an empire was founded, called Ts'in from the name of the country that conquered it; it lasted during the lifetime of one great emperor, then fell to a resurgent China.

A Chinaman took hold upon the Ts'in conquests, and the Ts'in empire became Chinese. A great life-period of civilization began when the Ts'in emperor united the world under his scepter, and lasted, with fluxes and refluxes, days and nights, until the Mongol Conquest under Kublai Khan about 1250. During all those fifteen centuries China was fertile in great men and ideas, creative in art and literature; since the Mongol Conquest she has been comparatively sterile.

The next dawn came in West Asia. It happened about 220 A. D., when the Persian Artaxerxes of the House of Sassan rose against the Parthians and established a Persian power. The Persians, be it noted, were a highly cultured people who had been inert in subjection to the rather barbarous Parthians for some centuries; with their resurrection under the Sassanidae civilization began to go forward.

After about four centuries an enormous new cultural impulse arose in those parts.

An illiterate camel-driver of Mecca managed to impress upon his countrymen, quite uncivilized at that time, that he had a message for them from Deity; he succeeded in welding them together, after a fashion, into a nation, and sent them forth conquering and to conquer. Roman civilization, in those days, was quite decadent, and its religion was marked by extreme intolerance. The Sassanid empire, too, had expended its force; and its religion, Zoroastrianism, was also intolerant and persecuting. In both systems learning was in abeyance and culture on the wane,— probably less so in Persia than in Rome. Mohammed actually made his Arabs believe that Allah loved a learned man, a man who would study and go "in quest of learning," more than almost any other kind of man; he also impressed upon them the idea that, in his own words, "there should be no compulsion in religion." He attained to what we may call temporal power in 622; one hundred and thirty years after which event, the empire of his successors having

by that time spread from the Pyrenees to the Indus, a period of extraordinary cultural activity began under the Abbasid Caliphs at Bagdad. Mindful of their Prophet's saying that "the ink of the doctors was more precious in God's sight even than the martyrs' blood," the Moslems gathered together in their courts and colleges all that was attainable of the old learning of Greece, Persia and India; they made grand advances in science, and produced an enormous and very valuable literature; and their standards of living generally compared with those of then barbarous Europe much as the standards of modern Europe and America compare with those of modern Turkey or Persia. The cultural energies of Mohammedan civilization lasted, waning for some centuries, until about two hundred years ago.

From the time of the fall of the western Roman Empire, Europe had been progressing only in barbarism; in the middle of the thirteenth century or thereabouts, a change took place; the tide turned. Moslem cul-

ture began to affect Christendom much as in our own time western culture has been affecting China and Japan. The crusaders, returning from the east, brought back with them the inescapable knowledge that they had been contacting a civilization much higher than their own. Kings and princes in Europe discovered that whereas they always died under the ministrations of their own native doctors, by sending to the court of Moorish Spain they could get men who could cure them. Southern France had been held by the Moors for some time, and largely civilized by them; and though they were soon driven out, their standards of living, etc., remained. Sicily also had been held by the Moslems — it had belonged to Egypt — and had been civilized. Later it was conquered by the Normans; from whom it passed to the House of Hohenstaufen. Early in the thirteenth century, Frederic II of that dynasty came to the throne there. His subjects were mostly Moslems, and highly civilized; he himself was a Moslem in all but

religion, in respect to which he was a free-thinker. He spent most of his life forcing a path for civilization up the Italian peninsula into Europe. At his court the Italian language was standardized and made a fit vehicle for literature; he founded universities at Naples and Salerno in which Arabs and the pupils of Arabs were the professors. Just as Chinese and Japanese students have been coming latterly to our own universities to learn, and then returning home to teach: and just as European professors have been employed in the universities of those countries: so in those days Arabs taught in the new universities of Europe, and bright young minds from Christendom flocked to the Arab universities, and returned in due course to Paris, to Oxford, to Naples, to impart to their countrymen what they had learned. Mohammed had had the habit, when preaching in his little mosque at Medina, of wearing a kind of scarf or shawl thrown over his shoulders; it became the custom of Moslem professors, when addressing their classes, to

wear a like garment in memory of him. That garment now survives as the scholastic gown worn by professors at our universities: which fact is symbolic of the relation of our culture to the now vanished civilization of the Moslems which preceded it,— and also of the debt the world owes to Mohammed.

Now all this may be tabulated thus: A period of civilization, of cultural energies and advance began in

Western Asia in ———	and ended about	330 B. C.		
Europe	" 490 B. C.	"	"	" 450 A. D.
Eastern Asia	" 250 B. C.	"	"	" 1250 A. D.
Western Asia	" 220 A. D.	"	"	" 1700 A. D.
Europe	"1240 A. D. and still continues.			

Further, say in 1776, such a period began in America; and with the rise of Japan, say in 1870, in the Far East again.

Western Asia, Europe; — Eastern Asia, Western Asia, Europe, America; — Eastern Asia. It suggests the workings of Cyclic Law in history, does it not?

In Western Asia we possess records of a day, a night, a day, a night. In Europe, a

day, a night, a day. In the Far East, a day, a night, and the dawn of a new day.

Madame Blavatsky spoke of a cycle of supreme interest which we may just touch on here: that of the last quarter of each century; a time, she said, during which . . . a door of the spiritual world is opened, as it were; and an effort is made to inject a little of the Wisdom of the Ages into the rather brutal understanding of men,— of the race that may be at the time in the forefront of progress and civilization. The effects of this effort are not difficult to trace during the centuries, the seventh to the thirteenth, of Mohammedan pre-eminence;* in Christendom — because there the tradition of the Great Lodge, the Custodians of Wisdom, has been far more remote than among the Moslems — perhaps absent altogether,—the marks are not so clear until recent centuries.

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*Cf. 'Golden Threads in the Tapestry of History,' *The Theosophical Path,* Vols. VIII-XI.

But we may look backwards, and see what is to be found.

In the nineteenth century, when western civilization had come to its height — to years of something like discretion, we may say,— and there was a chance of doing something quite openly, H. P. Blavatsky came with the unequivocal message of Theosophy, founding her society in 1875. Discovery had gone far enough to make her teaching possible: the East had given up some of its treasures of literature; she was able to appeal to the Sanskrit books. — A hundred years before, conditions were not so ripe for a broadcast dissemination of philosophy: the sum of known things was much less; the message had to be more restricted. Still, Voltaire had prepared the way; he had smashed the deadly ecclesiastical molds of mind in France; there was an opening for the propaganda of Cagliostro and Saint-Germain among the Masons; it was something of the spiritual light those two brought into France that touched Wordsworth into

mysticism and poethood. In the seventeenth century we come on the activities of the English and Dutch Platonists; still vaguer, still less with the color of open Theosophical propaganda; yet there to say that there was a turning of minds towards the light. In the sixteenth, Giordano Bruno came to London, and infected with his Platonism the circles in which Spenser and perhaps Shakespeare moved: there is a wonderful and not sufficiently known passage in *The Faerie Queene* in which Reincarnation is quite plainly taught or described. And there is the grand Theosophy underlying *Hamlet* and the tragedies of Shakespeare.

Before that time what are we to look for? Europe was very raw and crude in the fifteenth century; no great place for thought, though there might be a breaking of the molds of mind through inspired great action. The birth of this entity, Modern Civilization, had taken place in the twelve-forties; there was a coming of age twenty-one decades later in the fourteen-fifties with the

fall of Constantinople, when the fires of Greek learning, that had so long smoldered under ashes there, were let loose in Italy to flame up in the Renaissance. Then began the very heyday of European adolescence, tremendous creative energies, and the first stirrings of thought, which, being new, could not *as thought* reach so far as to meet effectively the down-breathing from the spiritual world and result in important Theosophic enunciations; but which could yet, in an age of strong manhood and energy and action, inspire events of the utmost moment. The results of the down-breathing in the last quarter of the fifteenth century are no doubt to be seen in the Reformation of the sixteenth; the spiritual force had shattered mental molds; all was working towards a time when a real life-bringing message might be proclaimed. The Protestant martyrs played the hero magnificently for the sake of ideas in themselves insignificant; for a light infinitely remote, and seeming other than it was,— a light which at its source was

the Light of the World. So too that remote star led Columbus westward; and we may see its luminance more clearly interpretable as thought in the works, for example, of Pico della Mirandola (1463-1494). Looking backward again another century, we are able to see the result of another spiritual inspiration in the career of John Huss the Bohemian, burnt by the Church in 1415; and in the thirteenth century, in the work of Roger Bacon (died 1294). — In each succeeding century the movement becomes more definite, and more definitely Theosophical; until in the nineteenth, H. P. Blavatsky was enabled to establish in the world an actual link with the Great Lodge, such as had been lacking in Europe since the days when the Crotona mob wrecked the school Pythagoras had built up to meet the spiritual needs of the European peoples.*

*For further discussion of the subject of Cyclic Law in History see *The Theosophical Path*, Vols. XVI-XXI, 1919-21, 'The Crest-Wave of Evolution.'

VII

ANCIENT KNOWLEDGE

EXCAVATIONS near the Pyramids show that long before the period of the known dynasties the Egyptians had attained to a refinement and perfection calculated to excite the wonder of even the most ardent admirers of Grecian art. Far below the stratum of sand in which lay the remains gathered into the collections of Lepsius, Abbott, and the British Museum, were found buried the tangible proofs of the Hermetic doctrine of cycles. And since then abundant evidences have been found, in the Troad and elsewhere, of the gradual change from civilization to barbarism and back to civilization, and from civilization to barbarism again. Why then should we feel so reluctant to admit the possibility that, if the 'antediluvians' were so much better versed than ourselves in

certain sciences as to have been perfectly acquainted with important arts, which we now term *lost*, they might equally have excelled in psychological knowledge? Such a hypothesis must be considered as reasonable as any other until some countervailing evidence shall be discovered to destroy it.

Every true savant admits that in many respects human knowledge is yet in its infancy. Can it be that our cycle began in ages comparatively recent? These cycles, according to the Chaldaean philosophy, do not embrace all mankind at one and the same time. Professor Draper partially corroborated this view by saying that the periods into which geology has "found it convenient to divide the progress of man in civilization are not abrupt epochs which hold good simultaneously for the whole human race"; giving as an instance the "wandering Indians of America" who "are only at the present moment emerging from the Stone Age." Thus more than once scientific men have unwittingly confirmed the testimony of the ancients.

The impenetrable veil of arcane secrecy was thrown over the sciences taught in the sanctuary. This is the cause of the modern depreciation of the ancient philosophies. Much of Plato's public teachings and writings had therefore to consist of blinds, or half-truths, or allegories; and just as Jesus spoke in parables, so the Mysteries were ever reserved for special groups of neophytes — and, needless to say, they did not reach the Church of the days of Constantine, which never held the keys of the Mysteries; and hence can hardly be said to have lost them.

The ancient philosophers seem to be generally held, even by the least prejudiced of modern critics, to have lacked that profound and thorough knowledge in the exact sciences of which our century is so boastful. It is even questioned whether they understood that basic scientific principle: *ex nihilo nihil fit.* If they suspected the indestructibility of matter at all — say these commentators — it was not in consequence of a firmly established formula, but

only through intuitional reasoning and by analogy.

We hold to the contrary opinion. The exoteric doctrines of these philosophers as regards matter were open to public criticism; but their teachings in regard to spiritual things were profoundly esoteric. Being thus sworn to secrecy and religious silence upon abstruse subjects involving the relations of spirit and matter, they rivaled each other in their ingenious methods for concealing their real beliefs.

With the old philosophers, evolution was a universal theorem, a doctrine embracing the *whole*, and an established principle; while our modern evolutionists are enabled to present us merely with speculative theoretics: with particular, if not wholly *negative* theorems.

The philosophers themselves had to be *initiated into perceptive* mysteries, before they could grasp the correct idea of the ancients in relation to this most metaphysical subject. Otherwise— outside such initiation —

for every thinker there will be a "Thus far shalt thou go and no further," mapped out by his intellectual capacity, as clearly and unmistakably as there is for the progress of any nation or race in its cycle by the law of Karma. Much of current agnostic speculation on the existence of the 'First Cause' is little better than veiled materialism — the terminology alone being different. Even so great a thinker as Herbert Spencer speaks of the 'Unknowable' occasionally in terms that demonstrate the lethal influence of materialistic thought, which, like the deadly sirocco, has withered and blighted most of current ontological speculation. For instance, when he terms the "First Cause"— the *Unknowable* — a "power *manifesting* through phenomena," and an "infinite eternal *Energy*," (?) it is clear that he has grasped solely the *physical* aspect of the mystery of Being — the Energies of Cosmic Substance only. The co-eternal aspect of the ONE REALITY— Cosmic Ideation — (as to its *noumenon*, it seems non-existent in the mind of the great

thinker) — is absolutely omitted from consideration.

Without doubt, this *one-sided* mode of dealing with the problem is due largely to the pernicious Western practice of subordinating consciousness, or regarding it as a 'byproduct' of molecular motion.

The doctrine of metempsychosis has been abundantly ridiculed by men of science and rejected by theologians; yet if it had been properly understood in its application to the indestructibility of matter and the immortality of spirit, it would have been perceived that it is a sublime conception. Should we not first regard the subject from the standpoint of the ancients before venturing to disparage its teachers? The solution of the great problem of *eternity* belongs neither to religious superstition nor to gross materialism. The harmony and mathematical equiformity of the double evolution — spiritual and physical — are elucidated only in the universal numerals of Pythagoras, who built his system entirely upon the so-called

'metrical speech' of the Hindû *Vedas*.

In the *Vedas* we find positive proof that so long ago as *at least* 2000 B. C., the Hindû sages and scholars must have been acquainted with the rotundity of our globe and the heliocentric system.

In the *Surya Siddhânta*, ślokas 29 to 34, we read as follows:

> In an Age, the [annual] revolutions of the Sun, Mercury and Venus, and of the conjunctions of [the former with] Mars, Saturn, and Jupiter, moving eastward, are 4,320,000. Of the Moon, 57,753,336; of Mars, 2,296,832; of Mercury's conjunction, 17,937,060; of Jupiter, 364,220; of Venus' conjunction, 7,022,376; of Saturn, 146,568; of the Moon's apsis in an age, 488,203; of its node, in the contrary direction, 232,238; of asterisms, 1,582,237,828.

Dividing the number of revolutions of the moon in an Age by those of the sun in the same period to obtain the number of sidereal lunar months *per annum*, we get $57,753,336 \div 4,320,000 = 13.3688+$. Making the same calculation with the figures of modern science, we have $365.2564 \div 27.32166 = 13.3688—$.

Next take Mars and compare the relative lengths of the terrestrial and Martian years: 4,320,000 ÷ 2,296,832 = 1.8808, the terrestrial year equaling of course 1. And by modern figures, 686.9897 ÷ 365.2564 = 1.8808. And so on. By means of this accurate knowledge of the planetary periods, the ancient Hindûs divided time into ages, and could calculate the epochs of great conjunctions in the past and future. It will be observed that the key number of these calculations is a period of upwards of four million years, termed an Age. It is a number unknown to and undreamed of by modern science. And yet it is only one of the minor cycles known to the Wisdom-Religion.

In view of the *fact* that we have this extremely ancient astronomical treatise, of such wonderful accuracy, wealth of detail, and far-reaching scope, what is to be said of those who declare and even teach that the ancients were ignorant heathen? It comes to this, that our modern 'authorities' must plead guilty to one of three things: (*a*) wilful

falsehood, deceit, and trickery; (*b*) unpardonable ignorance of their subject; (*c*) self-deception sufficient to brand them as persons whose judgment is hopelessly feeble and altogether unreliable.

We are just emerging from the bottom of a special cycle, and therefore in a transitory stage. We need no stronger proof of the theory of cyclic progression than a comparison of the enlightenment of former ages with that of the Patristic church, as regards the form of the earth, and the movements of the planetary system. Even were other evidence wanting, the ignorance of Augustine and Lactantius, misleading the whole of Christendom upon these questions until the period of Galileo, would mark the eclipses through which human knowledge passes from age to age.

SYMBOLS OF THE PILGRIMAGE

ACCORDING to the Arabian descriptions, each of the seven chambers of the Pyramids

— those grandest of all cosmic symbols — was known by the name of a planet, this in its turn symbolizing one of the perfectly definite states of consciousness, plus its realm of super-physical objectivity or actuality. The peculiar architecture of the Pyramids shows in itself the drift of the metaphysical thought of their builders. The apex is lost in the clear blue sky of the land of the Pharaohs, and typifies the primordial point lost in the unseen universe whence started the first race, or the spiritual prototypes of man. Each mummy, from the moment that it was embalmed, lost its physical individuality in one sense; it symbolized the human race. Placed in such a way as was best calculated to aid the exit of the 'Soul,' the latter had to pass through the seven planetary chambers before it made its exit through the symbolical apex. Each chamber typified at the same time, one of the seven spheres, and one of the seven types of physico-spiritual humanity alleged to be linked to our own.

Every three thousand years, the soul,

representative of its race, had to return to its primal point of departure before it underwent another evolution into a more perfected spiritual and physical transformation. We must go deep indeed into the abstruse metaphysics of Being before we can realize the infinitude of the subjects embraced at one sweep by the majestic symbolism of its ancient Adepts.

Starting as a pure and perfect spiritual being; becoming far later the Adam of the second chapter of *Genesis;* not 'satisfied' with the position allotted to him by the Demiurgos (who is the eldest first-begotten, the Adam-Kadmon), Adam the second, the "man of dust," strives in his pride to become creator in his turn. Evolved then out of the androgynous Kadmon, Adam thus became himself an androgyne; for according to the oldest teachings, presented *allegorically* in Plato's *Timaeus*, the prototypes of our race were all enclosed in the microcosmic tree which grew and developed within and under the great mundane or macrocosmic

tree. Divine spirit being considered a unity, however numerous the rays of the great spiritual sun, man has still had his origin like all other forms, whether organic or otherwise, in this one Fount of Eternal Light.

Were we even to reject the hypothesis of an early androgynous man, in connexion with *physical evolution*, the significance of the allegory in its spiritual sense would remain unimpaired. So long as this androgyne race, symbolizing the two opposite principles of creation unified (the dual male-female element) had no thought of good and evil, he could not hypostasize sex. It was only when, as a result of the evil hints of the serpent, *matter*, the latter cooled and condensed itself on the spiritual man in its contact with the elements, that the fruits of the man-tree — who is himself that tree of knowledge — began to appear to his awakening understanding. From this moment the androgynal union ceased, and man evolved out of himself in course of aeons the present humanity. They had broken the thread be-

tween pure spirit and pure matter. Henceforth they could create no more *spiritually*, and by the sole power of their will; man had become a physical creator, and the kingdom of spirit could henceforth be won only by a long imprisonment and experience among the illusions of matter.

To begin further back. At the dawn of a fresh Mahâ-Kalpa the Invisible "assumed form when It called the universe (again) into existence" says the *Zohar*. The first light is Its soul, the Infinite, Boundless and Immortal breath; under the efflux of which the universe heaves its mighty bosom, infusing *Intelligent* awakening life throughout sleeping creation. The *second* emanation condenses cometary matter and produces forms within the cosmic circle; sets the countless worlds floating in the electric space, and infuses the *intelligent* life-principle into every form. The *third* produces the whole universe of molecular matter; and as it keeps gradually receding from the Central Divine Light its brightness wanes and it becomes

Darkness and the Bad; pure matter becomes the "gross purgations of the celestial fire" of the Hermetists.

Speaking Kabalistically: When the Central Invisible saw the efforts of the divine *Scintilla* (unwilling to be dragged lower down into the degradation of matter) to liberate itself, It (as a necessity of Karmic Law) "permitted" it to shoot out from itself a *monad*, over which, attached to it as by the finest thread, the Divine Scintilla (the Soul) had to watch during its ceaseless peregrinations from one form to another. Thus the monad was shot down into the first form of matter and became encased in stone; then, in course of time, through the combined efforts of *living fire* and *living water* (both of which shone their *reflexion* upon the stone) the monad crept out of its prison to sunlight as a lichen. From change to change it went higher and higher; the monad with every new transformation borrowing more of the radiance of its parent *Scintilla*, which approached it nearer at every transmigration.

For "the First Cause had willed it to proceed in this order"; and destined it to creep on higher until its physical form became (once more) the Adam of *dust*, shaped in the image of the Adam Kadmon. Before undergoing its earthly transformation, the external covering of the monad (from the moment of its conception as an embryo) passes in turn, once more, through the phases of the several kingdoms. In its fluidic prison it assumes a vague resemblance at various periods of the gestation to plant, reptile, bird, and animal, until it becomes a human embryo. At the 'birth' of the future man, the monad, radiating with all the glory of its immortal parent which watches it from the seventh sphere, becomes *senseless* (see Plato's *Timaeus*). It loses all recollection of the past, and returns to consciousness but gradually, when the instinct of childhood gives way to reason and intelligence.

At death, after the separation between the vehicle of the spiritual man and the body takes place, the liberated soul-Monad,

exultingly rejoins the mother- and father-spirit, the radiant Augoeides; and the two, merged into one, forever form, with a glory proportioned to the spiritual purity of the past earth-life, the Adam who has completed once again the 'circle of necessity.' Long before this he was freed from the last vestige of its physical encasement. Henceforth, growing more and more radiant at each step of his upward progress, he mounts the shining path that ends at the point from which it started around the GRAND CYCLE.

Such is the broad outline of human destiny, sketched so as to show the essential Dual Nature of every particle and organism in the universe; the main fact, in short, which modern scientific thought is reaching towards, but has not yet by any means fully grasped. *Dual*, that is, as having two broad aspects, the material and the spiritual. *Triple*, in reality, as both spirit and matter rest upon something within — the Rootless Root — or Causeless Cause, the *only* Reality in truth — all else being more or less transi-

tory, even though lasting for periods so vast as to be absolutely beyond the reach of human thought. And *Septenary*, still more exactly and scientifically, owing to fundamental laws which are touched upon in others of these Manuals, and more fully treated of in *The Secret Doctrine*.

The details of cyclic law are not such as can be given here. Many figures could be given, having both general and astronomical significance; but the truth of the matter is, as has already been hinted, that there is no subject connected with the sacred mysteries of human fate, of life and death, upon which less has been definitely stated by the Messengers of the Ancient Wisdom. And for very good reasons, which are indeed so obvious to any thoughtful mind that loves the human race, that it seems hardly necessary to say more.

VIII

IMPORTANCE OF PRESENT CYCLE

THE important thing at present for us to know in this connexion, is that there *are* Cycles in human destiny and in the destiny of civilized as well as of other races; and the world may erelong be aroused to a perception of the fact that the Cycle now commencing is one of the utmost importance to all on earth: because in the course of a very few years the whole world, whether it knows it or not, will be obliged in a measure to take sides for or against the higher progress of the human race. People will gradually be found arrayed for or against the recognition of human solidarity as a fact in nature. For there is something in the nature of the cycle now breathing its Fire upon the world, something so compelling in its essence — withal so uplifting —

that everyone will be as it were driven to make a choice within his own nature; he will become clearly aware of something within tending to ennoble and to imbue his soul with some of the lost 'diviner drink' of soul-life.

The unrest of the world at its root and foundation (however varied the surface eddies) is a divine unrest, and belongs to a fresh summit gained on the great spiral stairway of progress. It is a Wind blowing into our hearts, the Wind of a better and purer life, destined to affect swiftly for good the advancing nations of the east and the west; although a touch of this Wind may complete the ruin of some decadent places.

Being is an endless cycle within the one absolute eternity, wherein move numberless inner cycles finite and conditioned. Gods, *'created' as such,* would evince no personal merit in being gods. Such a class of beings (perfect only by virtue of the special immaculate nature inherent in them) in the face of suffering and struggling humanity, and even of the lower creation, would be the symbol

of an eternal injustice quite Satanic in character, an ever-present wrong. It is an impossibility in Nature.

The cycles of the septenary evolution in Septennial Nature proceed, then, as follows: the Spiritual or Divine; the semi-divine; the intellectual; the passional; the instinctual, or *cognitional;* the semi-corporeal; and the purely material or physical natures. All these evolve and progress cyclically, passing from one into another, in a double, centrifugal and centripetal way, *one* in their ultimate essence, *seven* in their aspects. The lowest, of course, is the one depending upon and subservient to our five physical senses (which are in truth seven, however). Thus far, human, animal and vegetable life; each the *microcosm* of its higher *macrocosm.* The same for the Universe, which manifests periodically for purposes of the collective progress of the countless *lives* (the out-breathings of the One *Life*) in order that every atom in this infinite Universe, passing from the formless and the intangible, through the mixed na-

tures of the semi-terrestrial down to matter in full generation, and then back again, re-ascending at each new period higher and nearer the final goal — that each atom, we say, *may reach through individual merit and efforts* that plane where it re-becomes the one unconditioned ALL. But between the Alpha and the Omega there is the weary "Road" hedged in by thorns, which goes down first, then "winds up hill all the way, yea, to the very end."

Starting upon the long journey immaculate; descending more and more into matter, and having connected himself with every atom in manifested *Space*, the *Pilgrim*— having struggled through and suffered in every form of life and being—is only at the bottom of the valley of matter, and half through his cycle, when he has identified himself with collective Humanity. This *he has made in his own image.* In order to progress upwards and homewards, the 'God' has now to ascend the weary uphill path of the Golgotha of Life. It is the martyrdom

of self-conscious existence. Like Viśvakarman he has to sacrifice *himself to himself* in order to redeem all creatures, to resurrect from the many into the *One Life*. Then he ascends into heaven indeed; where, plunged into the incomprehensible absolute Being and Bliss of Paranirvâna, he reigns unconditionally, and whence he will descend again at the next 'coming.'

Our ignorance of the laws of Karma and of the scope of Cyclic Impression —

which one portion of mankind calls the ways of Providence, dark and intricate; while another sees in them the action of blind Fatalism; and a third, simple chance, with neither gods nor devils to guide them — would surely disappear, if we would but attribute all these to their correct cause. With right knowledge, or at any rate with a confident conviction that our neighbors will no more work to hurt us than we would think of harming them, the two-thirds of the World's evil would vanish into thin air. Were no man to hurt his brother, Karma-Nemesis would have neither cause to work for, nor weapons to act through. It is the constant presence in our midst of every element of strife and opposition, and the division of races, nations, tribes, societies, and individuals into Cains and

Abels, wolves and lambs, that is the chief cause of the "ways of Providence." . . . We stand bewildered before the mystery of our own making, and the riddles of life that *we will not* solve, and then accuse the great Sphinx of devouring us. But verily there is not an accident in our lives, not a misshapen day, or a misfortune, that could not be traced back to our own doings in this or another life. If one breaks the laws of Harmony, or, as a Theosophical writer expresses it, "the laws of life," one must be prepared to fall into the chaos one has oneself produced. For, according to the same writer, "the only conclusion one can come to is that these laws of life are their own avengers; and consequently that every avenging Angel is only a typified representation of their reaction."

Therefore, if anyone is helpless before these immutable laws, it is not ourselves, the artificers of our destinies, but rather those angels, the guardians of harmony. Karma-Nemesis is no more than the (spiritual) dynamical effect of causes produced and forces awakened into activity by our own actions. It is a law of occult dynamics that "a given amount of energy expended on the spiritual or astral plane is productive of far greater results than the same amount expended on the physical objective plane of existence."

This state will last till man's spiritual intuitions are fully opened, which will not happen before we fairly cast off our thick coats of matter; until we begin

acting from *within*, instead of ever following impulses from *without;* namely, those produced by our physical senses and gross selfish body. Until then the only palliative to the evils of life is union and harmony — a Brotherhood IN ACTU, and *altruism* not simply in name."— *The Secret Doctrine*, I, pp. 643-4

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